

NATIONAL PANEL OF ASSESSORS SUPPORTED WAGE SYSTEM(SWS)



Supported Wage System

Many people with disability obtain employment in the open labour force at full award wages but, for others the nature of disability can affect their productive capacity. People in such circumstances may require a reliable process of productivity assessment in order to obtain jobs. The purpose of the Supported Wage System (SWS) is to provide a process for reliable and independent work productivity assessments to enable people with disability to obtain employment in open labour market.

The SWS was introduced in 1994 to increase employment opportunities for people with disability by providing a workplace relations mechanism that enables the legal payment of a productivity-based or pro rata wage to people who cannot work at full productivity.

The SWS productivity assessment process provides a method to assess the productivity of the worker against average performance levels of co-workers without disability undertaking the same tasks or duties in the workplace.

The SWS was developed in consultation with the relevant industrial authorities, employer, trade union and disability peak bodies, government departments and specialised employment agencies for people with disability.

Who Conducts the SWS Productivity Assessment?

The role of the SWS assessor is to work cooperatively in the workplace and not seek to impose a primary decision-making or arbitration role.

The SWS assessment process must be conducted in a manner which ensures the employer and the worker has a strong sense of ownership of the outcome.

As specified in the relevant industrial provisions, the wage rate to be paid will be based on the result of a SWS assessment of the productive capacity of the worker with disability. All applicable industrial provisions allow for the productive capacity of the worker to be assessed by the employer, the worker and a DEEWR – Approved SWS assessor.

Assessments are generally undertaken by providers contracted by DEEWR to perform SWS assessments.